Through the Lens of Soviet Psychoanalysis and Utopian Dreams of the 1920s

<CT>Through the Lens of Soviet Psychoanalysis and Utopian Dreams of the 1920s:

<CST>Ivan Ermakov's Readings of Pushkin's Poetry

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<FL>The collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 led to the revival of several approaches to literature that were previously treated as taboo subjects, including psychoanalysis. One example is the legacy of Ivan Dmitrievich Ermakov (1875–1942), a psychiatrist, artist, translator, and literary critic, whose previously published and unpublished essays on Pushkin, Gogol, and Dostoevsky appeared in Russia in book form in 1999.[1]

Ermakov was a major force in the advancement of the psychoanalytic approach to fine arts and literature in the Soviet Union: he was the first president of the Russian Psychoanalytic Society and one of the founders of the State Psychoanalytic Institute in Moscow in 1921 (it was closed in 1925), as well as an editor of the nine-volume series of Freud's work in Russian translation—the only officially approved translation of Freud during the Soviet period.[2] His books on Pushkin, Gogol, and Dostoevsky (published in 1919, 1923, and 1924, respectively) testify to the popularity of Freud's ideas in Russian literary criticism in the 1910s and 1920s. In the 1930s, when the psychoanalytic approach to literature was suppressed in favor of the socialist realist aesthetic, Ermakov had to work as a private consultant. He was arrested in 1941, and in 1942 he died in prison in Saratov. Although Ermakov was rehabilitated posthumously in 1959, his works were republished in Russia only in the post-Soviet period. The present chapter assesses Ermakov's contribution to the formation of the Pushkin myth in 1920s Soviet Russia, focusing on Ermakov's eclectic approach to Pushkin's life and works that incorporates both Marxist and Freudian ideas. Ermakov, I argue, subordinates his psychoanalytic method to his aim of promoting a notion of "culturedness" (kul'turnost') and the role of the irrational in literature.[3]

Clearly, Ermakov had in mind a new Soviet reader capable of responding creatively to historical developments in the style of Pushkin. Although Ermakov's interpretation of Pushkin's works sounds too utilitarian in places, it sheds light on the rich interaction between art and life during the radical remaking of Soviet society in the 1920s.[4]

Ermakov in his 1923 volume on Pushkin describes his approach as an "organic" method of literary analysis that considers the form and content of a poem as well as the psyche of its author.[5] Such a conception of art has its roots in European Romanticism and promotes a dialectical and symbolist view of poetry.[6] Ermakov deals primarily with *The Little House in Kolomna* (*Domik v Kolomne*) and the *Little Tragedies* (*Malen'kie tragedii*). In a nutshell, Ermakov argues that *The Little House in Kolomna* reflects Pushkin's conflicting emotions on the eve of his marriage to Natalia Goncharova. In Ermakov's opinion, Pushkin wanted to marry Goncharova but at the same time feared the marriage and wished to escape it. The unresolved tension is translated into the unresolved plot of *The Little House in Kolomna*. Ermakov's analysis of three poems included in the volume—"The Rabble" ("Chern'"), "I built myself a monument not made by human hands ("Ia pamiatnik sebe vozdvig nerukotvornyi"), and "Desire" ("Zhelanie")—reinforces his thesis that Pushkin in his self and his art is a poet of contradictions and conflicting emotions. Ermakov sees the inner emotional struggle expressed in Pushkin's writings as a manifestation of his "dynamic unconscious," which is inseparable from his creative process.[7] Ermakov's survey of contrasting aspects of Pushkin's creative psychology provides insight into Pushkin's "artistic laboratory" and presents the Russian national poet as a craftsman who values labor, reflexivity, and self-control.

By promoting Pushkin as an enlightened poet who could master his emotions and attain a higher consciousness through his creative activity, Ermakov casts himself as an active participant

in the cultural revolution, which might be seen as a two-stage process that took place in the 1920s and 1930s.[8] During its first, New Economic Policy period, such notions as "culturedness" and "self-enlightenment" were promoted widely as part of Bolshevik attempts to bring consciousness to the masses—despite the fact that many Bolshevik theoreticians could not agree on what culture was and what it should be.[9] Nevertheless, Lenin's notion of cultural revolution that focused on the habits of "civilized" societies and on the twin goals of overcoming "barbarism" and mastering science and technology inspired Soviet utopian thinkers to broaden the vision of proletarian culture offered by Proletkult activists.[10] Many Soviet critics, including Laborsh Kalmanson (pseudonym G. Lelevich), talked about the construction of new forms of life that would replace the old notion of everyday life, and many publications produced for educational purposes in the 1920s listed the qualities expected from those who were involved in cultural activities, propaganda, and education: acquisition of knowledge, "culturedness," self-governance, good time management, and moral principles that were subordinated to the new methods of regulating everyday life.[11]

In the 1920s the artistic avant-garde contributed to this formulation of ideologically correct forms of everyday behavior in response to Marxists' theoretical statements linking cultural revolution to reworking nature and reconfiguring people's personality characteristics, everyday habits, and feelings in the new Soviet context.[12] Ermakov's discussion of Pushkin's ability to rationalize his emotions might be seen as an expression of his utopian desire to present Pushkin as a model figure that could be used for the formation of a new Soviet man—in the style of utopian experiment and speculation (these would become taboo subjects during the 1930s). In light of the ongoing drive to create "cultured" behaviors, Ermakov's effort to bring together literature, science, and psychoanalysis does not look coincidental: to a great extent in the 1920s,

revolutionary self-fashioning and the transformation of others were interconnected.

Indeed, Ermakov's essays on Pushkin provide us with useful insights into a period of important cultural and social change that triggered many debates about the usefulness of Freud's works for Soviet literature, education, and Marxist thought. For example, Alexander Voronsky, one of the advocates of Freudian approaches to literature and an editor of the influential literary journal *Krasnaia nov'* (*Red Virgin Soil*), expressed his positive view of the significance of the unconscious to writers and critics on several occasions throughout the 1920s. Voronsky suggested that Soviet literary critics should possess a special sensitivity to the unconscious so as to be able to evaluate "the extent to which the various deeds of a hero are internally motivated and consistent with his nature."[13] In his 1925 article ""Psychoanalysis as a Method of Investigating Imaginative Literature" ("Psikhoanaliz kak metod issledovaniia khudozhestvennoi literatury"), I.A. Grigor'ev welcomes Ermakov's exploration of the unconscious while rejecting Freud's interpretation of sexuality.[14]

In contrast to Ermakov, Ischaia D. Sapir, a member of the Communist Academy in Moscow, makes a distinction between the sociological dimension of Freud's work and the psychological core of his theory in his 1926 article "Freudism and Marxism" ("Freidizm i marksizm"). Sapir's article highlights the inadequacies and contradictions of Freud's major concepts, including the idea of the reality of the unconscious. In Sapir's opinion, psychological mechanisms by themselves cannot explain the existence of ideology and other social phenomena. Sapir asserts that Freud's belief that the unconscious can be analyzed on the individual level, separate from these collective realities, is a serious methodological error.[15] Sapir's criticism of Freud can be easily extended to Ermakov's analysis of Pushkin's and Gogol's works. In a similar way, Roman Jakobson and Dmitrii Mirsky dismissed Ermakov's writings as an expression of

"vulgar Freudianism" (vul'garnyi freidizm) and extravagant nonsense.[16] In his 1927 speech "Culture and Socialism," Trotsky (a former member of various Freudian associations organized by Adolf Joffe and Alfred Adler in Vienna) also expressed doubt that the philosophical underpinnings of Freud's ideas were truly materialist. Trotsky saw the Freudian theoretical approach to literature as a hypothesis that supported only some findings of materialist psychology.[17] Valentin N. Voloshinov, an associate of the linguistic philosopher and literary critic Mikhail Bakhtin around whom a circle of artists and scholars gathered in Leningrad during the early 1920s, also directed his efforts against the rising influence of psychoanalysis. Voloshinov's 1927 book *Freudianism: A Critical Essay* (*Freidizm: Kriticheskii ocherk*), which dismisses the doctrines of Henri Bergson for their emphasis on intuition and Freudian theory for its preoccupation with sexuality, might be seen as the last substantial examination of Freudianism in the Soviet Union.[18] Voloshinov suggests that Soviet readers' view of Freud's writings is highly reductionist; this view can be characterized by such statements as "the human psyche belongs to the realm of nature" and "human psychic life is part of elemental life."[19]

Furthermore, Freud's unified model of subjectivity—the combination of scientific and literary visions of selves as natural objects and conscious subjects—was seen by the Bolshevik leaders as a model that could undermine their attempt to organize an integrated worldview privileging a politically dominant minority. Ermakov's failure to produce a Marxist theory of literature based on combined psychoanalytic and physiological assessments of selves is comparable to the failure of many formalist critics to construct a Marxist theory of literature during the first Soviet decade. Both the psychoanalytic and formalist approaches were meant to merge literary analysis with science. Yet the theorization of the relationship between the conditions of life and literature that is found in the works of Ermakov and the Russian formalists

(both of whom focus on the pragmatic links between literary speech and the contexts it describes and on the nature of literary material) was eliminated from the canon of Marxist theory, as outlined in Lev Trotsky's 1924 book *Literature and Revolution*. As Trotsky puts it, "only Marxism is capable of explaining why and from where a given direction in art has arisen in any given epoch, i.e. who has demanded certain artistic forms and not others, and why."[20] Since Trotsky dismisses many tenets of formalist theory and asserts that art should always be seen as a social servant and as historically utilitarian, neither Ermakov nor the Russian formalists would ultimately be able to subordinate entirely their theoretical approaches to literature to this core principle of dialectical materialism. Viktor Shklovsky's 1929 observation that "Marxists are not to be found" reveals his frustration with the formalists' inability to resolve the difficulties of adapting Marxist social and economic theory to issues of aesthetics.[21] Similar contradictions can be found among those Soviet critics who aspired to merge psychoanalysis and Marxism.

Wilhelm Reich's statement that "psychoanalysis has a future only under socialism because it undermines bourgeois ideology"[22] sheds some light on Ermakov's attempt to reinvent Russian classical authors in accordance with Soviet psychologists' and psychoanalysts' efforts to create a Marxist psychology of mankind. Owing to the absence of any concrete guidance from the founding fathers of communist theory, these efforts were eclectic and often contradictory. The eclectic nature of this utopian project is also felt in Ermakov's Freudian engagement with the Pushkin myth, which can be linked to the aspiration of some Russian medical professionals (including Vikentii Veresaev) to use literature to shape a healthy outlook on the part of Soviet citizens and provide them with an opportunity to use literary works as models for the creation of new forms of everyday life.[23] Toward the end of the 1920s, the cultural policies of the New Economic Policy period were subjected to severe criticism and eventual suppression. Given the

fact that in the Soviet Union, Freud's ideas became taboo beginning in this period, Ermakov's examination of inner conflict and the effects of violence on the human psyche, together with his interest in the therapeutic effects of reading, also came to be deemed unsuitable for the construction of the myth of a happy childhood and the ideology of a "new Soviet man."

Ermakov's writing on Pushkin offers insight into the early stages of the construction of the notion of "culturedness," which is entwined with the principle of self-control and the aesthetic appreciation of labor and craftsmanship.[24] Although Ermakov does not go so far as to present Pushkin as a Soviet writer (often defined in Soviet literature as an "engineer of the human soul"), he demonstrates that Pushkin's life was permeated with the rhetoric of labor and that it was subordinated to the poet's desire to turn his own life into a work of art.[25] Ermakov's analysis also created a mode of reading Pushkin's poetry as an internalized manifestation of the conflict between the poet and his oppressors, especially the bureaucracy and its censors—as did the 1921–22 commemorations of the eighty-fourth anniversary of Pushkin's death, which laid the ground for similar celebrations both in Soviet Russia and in emigration.[26]

Despite all the weaknesses and inconsistencies in Ermakov's readings of Pushkin's works, Ermakov engages with the formalist notion of the autonomy of literature in interesting ways; he is not, however, concerned with the notion of style. Ermakov sees any process of writing, reading, or performing as being essential for the formation of self. He ascribes to Pushkin's art the cathartic potential to help readers transcend contradictory influences and master emotions associated with traumatic experiences and the dark side of human consciousness. Yet his discussion of Pushkin contains a veiled allusion to the cultural and political demand of the Soviet government that was imposed on the average citizen to reconcile life as it was with life as it should be. Ermakov uses his analysis of Pushkin's works as an allegorical attempt to persuade his

readers that both sides of life must be acknowledged and that life's contradictions can only be resolved through artistic experiences.

Ermakov's view of Pushkin as a director-like poet who created his own theatrical space in his works enabled such poets and composers as Anna Akhmatova, Marina Tsvetaeva, and Dmitrii Shostakovich to explore the role of the irrational in Pushkin's art.[27] Although we do not find any direct references to Ermakov's volume in their works, their interpretations of Pushkin's creative self and of their own childhood memories display their familiarity with Freud's ideas. For example, Catriona Kelly describes autobiographical narratives of the 1920s–1940s as follows: "In post-revolutionary memoirs, the world of the nursery has often become a darker and bleaker place, closer to the nightmare milieu imagined by Freud. Both in Bely's *Kotik Letaev* (1920) and in the memoir-essays written by Tsvetaeva in Paris (notably, *The House at Old Pimen*1934), the inspiration of the future artist was seen to proceed as much out of fear and trauma as out of the spellbinding sensual wonder of early experience. (Zoshchenko's agonized psychoanalytical memoir *Before Sunrise* (, 1943), searching for the psychic wound in ever earlier layers of the memory, is a belated exercise in the same vein.)"[28]

It is difficult to understand the popular trend of the 1920s of exploring the role of the irrational in literature, a trend that is seen, for example, in the works of Nikolai Osipov on Lev Tolstoi, without Ermakov's analysis of Pushkin's works.[29] Ermakov's pioneering explorations of the dynamic unconscious in Pushkin's works, which suggest that these works might be read as a form of psychodrama, also evoke Alexander Gabrichevsky's notion of space and Nikolai Evreinov's principle of the theatricality of life.[30] It is not coincidental that, in an Ermakov-like manner, Akhmatova later considered the image of Don Juan to be a dramatic embodiment of Pushkin's inner self.[31] It seems that both Ermakov and Akhmatova were influenced by the neo-

Romantic and Freudian discussions undertaken by Russian and European modernists in the early twentieth century—epitomized in Alfred Adler's 1918 lecture on Dostoevsky—that correlated illness with creativity.[32] Ermakov's interest in signs of neurosis found in Pushkin's writings is likewise in line with Russian and European psychiatrists' model of genius—a model based on specific intellectual assumptions regarding creative individuals that the Romantics had appropriated from Greek antiquity, the Italian Renaissance, and the Enlightenment. During the modernist period these ideas were transformed into a system of beliefs that precluded the possibility of total mental health on the part of the creative genius.[33] Yet in the 1920s various Soviet psychiatrists, writers, and critics saw psychoanalysis as a tool that could contribute to the creation of a Marxist creative psychology and a new aesthetics.

The popularity of pathographies in this period testifies to the fact that medical practitioners wanted to influence major cultural developments by analyzing the rich interaction between art and life.[34] Ermakov's reading of Pushkin's *Little Tragedies*, too, invokes the genre of medical biography that had been used by the Russian "Victorians" in the prerevolutionary period as a forum for discussion of social issues related to the creative process. It is clear that Ermakov's interest in Pushkin's personal fears and emotional turmoil resembles his contemporaries' attempts to interpret literary works as expressions of personal anxieties, thereby blurring the boundary between biographical and literary accounts of a writer's life. For example, Russian writer and playwright Ivan Leont'ev-Shcheglov's article "Immodest Conjectures" ("Neskromnye dogadki") invites us to consider Pushkin's images of Mozart and Salieri as a true account of Pushkin's friendship with poet Evgenii Baratynsky; Vasilii Rozanov's essay "Something New on Pushkin" ("Koe-chto novoe o Pushkine") reinforces Shcheglov's interest in Pushkin's subjectivity and interprets Pushkin's Don Juan as an alter ego of the author; Vladislav Khodasevich's article on

Pushkin's poem "The Mermaid" ("Rusalka") offers an autobiographical reading of the text, linking it to Pushkin's affair with a peasant girl who might have committed suicide.[35] All these works raise important questions about the ethics of representation and the interrelationship between art and life; they highlight Pushkin's interest in taboo subjects related to violence and the transgression of social conventions and seek a biographical explanation for that interest.

In a similar vein, Ermakov's principle of the empirical aesthetic implies that the value of any literary analysis can be measured by its correspondence to empirical verification. Such a belief stems from Ermakov's fascination with Dmitrii Pisarev, a Russian critic in the utilitarian mold, whose ideas Ermakov struggled to overcome all his life.[36] Ermakov explains his eclectic combination of psychoanalysis with organicist and formalist criticism in a Pisarev-like utilitarian manner: "At the present time we notice, on the one hand, a great enthusiasm for formalist research which divides the living body of a work of art into separate, lifeless atoms from which it is dreamt that in the distant future, it will be possible again to unite and restore the whole, undivided work."[37] Ermakov's interpretation of Pushkin's identity is closely associated with his belief that the creative process is based on perception and cognition that recognize the importance of the person who senses, knows, or remembers and is capable of transcending his sense of alienation from society. His suggestion that, during the Boldino period, Pushkin's creative process was a healing tool that enabled him to overcome his anxieties and "get on the right track" illustrates well the utilitarian overtones of Freudian literary criticism.[38] Furthermore, Ermakov's analysis of Pushkin supports the use of the Freudian model as a theory of the normal personality, an approach that was increasingly condemned by Marxist critics.

Dissatisfied with formalist theoretical approaches that limit themselves to exploring only the *materiality* of speech acts, Ermakov goes further than the Russian formalists and pays close

attention to the *semantics* of sensual images, expressive gestures, and even phonetic patterns. For example, Ermakov claims that while some lines in Pushkin's poems are abundant in consonants in their first half, expressing a Romantic longing for escape and creating a sense of open-endedness, other lines tend to be saturated with consonants in their second part, conveying an impression of a self-contained space and a sense of closure. Moreover, Ermakov juxtaposes paintings and verse to argue that the phonetic organization of verse, alternating the use of vowels and consonants, corresponds to the organization of space found in paintings. He suggests, for example, that the use of the sounds *t*, *k*, *p*, *o*, and *s* in such lines of the poem "The Prophet" ("Prorok") as "na pereput'e mne iavilsia" (on the crossroads there appeared to me) and "i gad morskikh podvodnyi khod" (and the underwater procession of sea creatures) represents the lower realm of being associated with organic matter.[39] By contrast, excessive use of such vowels as *a* and *i* in such lines of the poem as "i gornii angelov polet" (and the flight of celestial angels) and "i shestikrylyi serafim" (and a six-winged seraph) create the impression of an ascending movement.[40] These examples demonstrate Ermakov's strong interest in Pushkin's gifts as a craftsman and as an effective communicator capable of painting with words. Ermakov's analysis suggests that Pushkin's skill at bringing together visual and verbal images could be highly relevant to Soviet educators and writers concerned with the materiality of signs.

Ermakov appears to be fully aware of the research on child language acquisition undertaken by many psychologists in the 1920s, including Lev Vygotsky and Sabina Spielrein (who in 1923 returned from Switzerland to Russia to participate in Ermakov's institute).[41] In his discussion of Pushkin's versification, Ermakov compares metrical patterns found in Pushkin's poetry to the use of iambic and trochaic meter in a child's speech. He claims, for example, that while in a child's speech the iambic meter represents helplessness, sadness, and a disoriented

state of mind, the trochaic meter is associated with confidence and self-assurance.[42] Ermakov's observations point to the fact that he reads Pushkin's poetry through the prism of the 1920s debates about the effective use of language and literature for propaganda and educational purposes. Analysis of the childlike qualities of Pushkin's verse was useful to Ermakov and his associates because they were searching for a new form of expression of revolutionary feelings through myth, symbol, ritual, and community.

As Spielrein's findings demonstrate, the pleasure principle and the reality principle could be bridged by analysis of the several stages of language acquisition, including the transitional stage that she defines as the "magical" stage. In other words, a child acquires language thanks to a biological drive, but this "autistic" stage of child development rapidly becomes connected to social necessity following a transitional (magical) state of development.[43] Spielrein's work on child development in the early 1920s emphasizes the role of prosody and talks about the magical stage as being motivated by a force that binds words and deeds. Ermakov interweaves Spielrein's notion of the magical into his reading of Pushkin's poetry and states that every poem has three aspects that correspond to the three drives of self-expression, defined in terms of the three different stages of mythologized self-representation: the first stage is based on the desire to reproduce and repeat, a desire that is especially evident in rhythmical and phonetic patterns of poetic speech; the second stage is associated with the poet's desire to visualize his emotions with the help of visual and sound images; the third stage is related to symbolic language invested with universal appeal. Ermakov sees Pushkin's ability to transcend reality through poetry as an essential part of a ritual-like activity that links performance and imagination.

Ermakov's discussion of Pushkin's 1821 poem "Desire," which speaks of lost love and paradise, develops Spielrein's and Jung's belief that complexes do not belong only to personal

experience but are also a product of ancestral experience.[44] In his analysis of this poem, as in his work on Pushkin's *Little Tragedies*, Ermakov surveys the expression of Pushkin's artistic psychology based on the Jungian vision of the self as a composite of several identities and links it to ritualistic aspects of poetic performance.[45] Ermakov's interpretation of "Desire" focuses on the poem's expression of an imaginary timeless space imbued with sensual images that the lyric hero reconstructs from his past. Ermakov uncovers in the poem some expressions of femininity "oriented toward the Mother Earth image," a source of life and creativity.[46] His analysis also turns on the notion of rewriting the texts produced by predecessors, a notion found in Harold Bloom's thesis that "a poem is not writing but *rewriting*."[47] Through his engagement with Pushkin's expressions of femininity and acts of rewriting/reproduction, Ermakov invokes the cyclicality of nature and culture, thereby affirming the ultimate value of both cyclicality and linearity for the creative process at a time when Marxist critics exclusively privileged the forward movement of historical time. Ermakov suggests that the reinvention of self in different contexts through the appropriation of different stylistic masks is a key to the survival of one's creative powers.

Ermakov's analysis of "Desire" highlights the importance of metaphysics to Pushkin's works. But his intention here is to demonstrate that Pushkin was able to overcome his hedonistic self by embracing the principles of materialist psychology. Similarly, he sees the Don Juan of Pushkin's play *The Stone Guest* (*Kamennyi gost'*) as an embodiment of neuroticism: "He is totally ruled by his anxieties and moods; he is preoccupied with understanding his own doubts; and he is prepared to sacrifice his own life and risk himself in order to escape from his tormented, doubting state of mind. Don Juan is not courageous, but paradoxically he gives an impression of a brave and reckless person, in spite of the fact that he is naïve and superficial. The

impression he gives to others stems from the fact that he is self-centered and ignores others, since his main purpose in life is to assert himself."[48] Ermakov compares Pushkin's Don Juan to one of his patients who had developed a pathological fear of the battle trenches during the Russo-Japanese War. One day the patient overcame this fear by recklessly walking in front of the trench during a heavy exchange of fire, and as a result of his heroism he was awarded the St. George Cross. In spite of his analysis of Don Juan's anxieties and the analogy he draws between Pushkin's fictional character and his own patient, Ermakov sees Pushkin's character as a carefree hedonist who lacks spiritual values. He concludes that Pushkin's play portrays a psychologically stable and healthy person who displays abnormal tendencies related to his exaggerated fear of commitment and responsibility. In Ermakov's view, Don Juan's anxieties and risk-taking behavior reveal traits of Pushkin's own personality. Yet at the same time he implies that Pushkin used his creative self in order to overcome his fears.[49]

By linking Pushkin's works to traumatic events, Ermakov demonstrates that the Russian model of psycho-physiological suffering contains a high degree of empathy; this model is connected to the holistic idea that men afflicted with war neuroses have somatic wounds in both mind and body. Ermakov fuses the psychologically oriented model of trauma developed in Russia in the 1910s with literary analysis and Freudianism, thus legitimizing ideas about mind-body responses to the environment.[50] In the late 1920s, however, the Soviet Marxists' merger of experimental psychology and physiology, based on the belief in universal patterns of conditioned reflexes, overshadowed the notion of subjectivity that was of particular interest to Ermakov.

Ermakov's concern with the representation of attitudes to death and trauma in Pushkin's works stems from his awareness of the Russian population's exposure to violence and traumatic events during the Russo-Japanese War and the 1905 revolution. Ermakov's perception that, as a

result of these conflicts, fear had become the dominant emotion in Russian culture explains why he is especially interested in how individuals overcome their anxieties.[51] By the same token, Ermakov's analysis of Pushkin's works might be seen as a veiled attempt to convey his concerns about the state of the mental health of the Soviet populace (which had been traumatized by World War I, the Civil War, and the Red Terror)—concerns that were overlooked by Soviet officials, who were primarily preoccupied in the 1920s with developing literacy.

In his discussion of Pushkin's play *The Miserly Knight* (*Skupoi rytsar'*), Ermakov alludes to contemporary mental health concerns allegorically through his reference to the traumatic discontinuity between the old and the new. Thus, Ermakov links *The Miserly Knight* to the poem *The Bandit Brothers* (*Brat'a-razboiniki*) and argues that both works feature the motif of a struggle between the old and new orders in Freudian terms—as an expression of the "father complex." Such references to the guilty conscience and acts of murder must have been unwelcome to Soviet officials, who no doubt worried they might invoke parallels with the Red Terror and the Civil War. It is unclear whether Ermakov hints at unexplained irrational aspects of Pushkin's psychology expressed in *The Bandit Brothers* because he wanted to suggest that such criminal thoughts resisted articulation or because he wanted to draw attention to examples of Pushkin's self-censorship. For example, Ermakov links murder to envy: "For some unknown reason the accidental murder of an old man keeps haunting one of the brothers, who goes mad . . . and whose guilty conscience reveals the fact that he had killed—in the form of this old man—his own envy complex toward his father."[52]

Ermakov's discussion of Pushkin's "A Feast in the Time of Plague" ("Pir vo vremia chumy") also touches on the inability of survivors of tragic events to repress their fear of death. Ermakov writes: "While trying to escape from the plague and from their thoughts about it, all

characters of Pushkin's play do nothing but constantly think about the plague, unable to free themselves from these thoughts even during their sleep and even when fainting."[53] On receiving a request to sing about the carefree life ("let me summon you to sing a song, a song of reckless life[,] . . . some wild bacchantic strain / Such as the overflowing glass inspires"), Walsingham appears incapable of disengaging his mind from his melancholy.[54] Ermakov thus interprets Walsingham's hymn as an act of despair that enables him to verbalize his fear of death. Yet Walsingham cannot overcome his anxieties, owing to his failure to transgress.[55] Ermakov reads Pushkin's play as a form of parable imbued with the hope that one day the readers who empathize with the characters described in "A Feast in the Time of Plague" will come to terms with their loss. He also ponders the question of aesthetic response to the horror embedded in Pushkin's text: "Despair, thanks to the terrifying memories (Walsingham is deceiving himself), transforms danger into a means of healing [*perezhivanie*] and creates a hymn."[56] In Ermakov's opinion, Walsingham's delusional mind seeks protection from the winter and the plague, leading to his indulgence in irresponsible behavior as a substitution for fear of death. Ermakov's rendering of Pushkin's tragedy, which portrays the participants of the blasphemous feast as nihilists, poses a question about the healing aspects of creativity exemplified by Pushkin's artistic psychology that might help to build Soviet society. Ermakov identifies some strategies for survival in Pushkin's text that could be relevant in his own day and suggests that Pushkin's legacy is important to the formation of cultural unity.

By grounding Pushkin's "A Feast in the Time of Plague" in the tradition of melancholic poetry, Ermakov downplays the symbolist fascination with Walsingham's demonic traits. Instead, he links the mystical traits discussed by Dmitrii Merezhkovsky and Iulii Aikhenval'd to the realm of everyday life.[57] Ermakov is more interested in the internalized conflict between

individual and society, claiming that Walsingham's mind "represents a battlefield between the two drives that determine his personality: his love for himself and his love for others."[58] According to this logic, Walsingham should have developed a conscious view of reality that could have enabled him to conquer his fear of death, but instead he is a weak person who makes excuses for his own passivity. Ermakov argues that Walsingham is incapable of rationalizing his emotions or of self-sacrifice: instead of responding to the priest's call to overcome his isolation and lead a collective response to the plague that haunts the whole community, he becomes completely withdrawn and silent. Ermakov's criticism of Walsingham's behavior reveals his negative attitude toward the glorification of anarchy and chaos as a metaphysical principle that was prevalent in the early 1920s and offers a new perspective on the formation of the collective self through art.[59] Ermakov ascribes to art the power to transcend a sense of estrangement from oneself and the community, thereby alluding to the possibility of constructing ideal societies in both the present and the future. According to Ermakov's vision, such societies should integrate past experiences into present life.

In light of his utopian aspirations, it is not surprising that Ermakov is especially keen to discuss the theme of painful memories as a recurring motif in Pushkin's works. According to Ermakov, the protagonists of all four *Little Tragedies* are incapable of changing their self-centered outlook. Nor does Walsingham reconcile his fantasy with reality: the virtual reality that he creates in his mind as a substitute for his tragic existence provides him with a temporary escape and leads to a repetitive melodramatic reenactment of his suffering. In Ermakov's opinion, Walsingham "becomes more conscious of his weakness and his spiritual emptiness" as the play progresses.[60] Having such a weak mind entrenches Walsingham more firmly in his fictional reality. Thus, Ermakov interprets the poetic statement in Walsingham's hymn that "there

is wild delight in battle and at the edge of a dark abyss" (est' upoenie v boiu i bezdny mrachnoi na kraiu) not as an expression of the flight of imagination but as a description of the traumatized state of mind: "Thus, having entered the vicious circle of his gloomy thoughts, Walsingham is incapable of breaking free from it."[61]

Ermakov's analysis of Pushkin's play replaces the autonomous thinking self found in idealist philosophy with the existentialist notion of a "tacit cogito" who becomes involved in the world through language. According to the French philosopher Maurice Merleau-Ponty, "The consciousness which conditions language is merely a comprehensive and inarticulate grasp upon the world, like that of an infant at his first breath"; it becomes explicit through perceptual exploration of speech, but "silent consciousness grasps itself only as a generalised 'I think' in the face of a confused world 'to be thought about.'"[62] Ermakov's statement that Walsingham chooses to display his suffering self to others reflects the belief that an individual's behavior comprises both free choice and creative strategies that Merleau-Ponty articulates. Such a pioneering approach to Pushkin's artistic psychology emphasizes the poet's ability to shift from one point of view to another, thereby revealing his fluid and creative self. Ermakov sees Walsingham, for example, as the embodiment of Pushkin's vulnerable self: "Walsingham is weak and miserable, he does not confront the situation and he runs away from his painful memories. His actions manifest only the one side of personality that is selfish and narrow-minded. There is another side of self that is beautiful and valuable. Pushkin expressed it well in his poem 'Farewell.' In this poem we come across an act of separation of two people, but it is described not as a completed event but as a continuous moment that transcends the poet's love."[63] Ermakov observes that, by contrast with Walsingham who suppresses his memories of Matilda, Pushkin's lyric hero in the poem "Farewell" ("Proshchanie") uses his creative imagination to bring his beloved back to life.

In spite of Ermakov's interest in Pushkin's biography, paradoxically, his focus on the inner emotional battle of the poet's creative self (Pushkin's dynamic unconscious) leads to the innovative presentation of Pushkin's art as a single **semiotic space**. By suggesting that Pushkin in "Farewell" successfully expresses his healthy and life-asserting self better than he conveys it in "A Feast in the Time of Plague," Ermakov dismisses the old-fashioned metaphysical inquiry into the soul and presents the whole of a person as the sum of his different selves. This approach implies the importance of the reinvention of the self in different contexts. For Ermakov, art affects the personality of the individual artist, not society as a whole. Ermakov believes that creative work enables the artist to experience catharsis that evokes similar responses in audience and readers: "Borrowing directly from Freud's theory of day-dreaming, he argues that art can provide the audience with an opportunity to indulge their own fantasies and to experience a catharsis similar to that of the artist. Since the fantasy content of art is believed to be derived from instinctual drives common to all mankind, this content will, at the deepest level, have a universal appeal."[64]

Ermakov brings together two different poetic responses to adverse circumstances, suggesting thereby that the life-asserting and creative use of melancholy manifested in Pushkin's "Farewell" is superior to the exteriorization of Walsingham's suffering that leads him to madness. Ermakov detects a healing vision of simultaneity in Pushkin's poem "Farewell" and in Mary's song in "A Feast in the Time of Plague": **"**The poet thinks that the beloved one believes that he is dead and therefore that she is a widow. Albeit the poet assumes that in the eyes of his beloved he is a dead person, his imagination cannot allow death to prevail in spite of his melancholy: he continues to live and the image of his beloved continues to inspire his imagination; it is as if his heart accepts his separation as a form of exile, in the same manner as Mary accepts her fate."[65]

Such an interpretation draws on Bergsonian notions of psychological time and simultaneity and brings Pushkin closer to the reader of the 1920s—the reader who struggles to reconcile his memories of the past with his present life. One can see in Ermakov's understanding of memory and bodily experiences of emotions the suggestion of a belief similar to Merleau-Ponty's that bodily experience cannot be fully understood objectively through the mechanisms of empirical physiology self-analysis alone.[66] Ermakov's assumption that Pushkin's writings on fear and loss derive from the poet's personal feelings reveals Ermakov's search for a similarly combined approach to explaining human emotion and artistic expression.

In spite of the references to realism throughout his book on Pushkin, Ermakov's discussion of Pushkin's mythologized self reinforces the view of Pushkin as a Romantic poet. It is not a coincidence that Ermakov's book is subtitled "An Attempt at an Organicist Understanding" ("Opyt organicheskogo ponimaniia"). For Ermakov, Pushkin's soul represents the fiery element that brings everything to life and purifies the manifestations of chaos. Ermakov links Pushkin's creativity to the cult of Eros and the sublimation of erotic desire: "The task of the poet is to preserve the fiery aspect of life, maintaining it throughout his entire life. The fiery aspect of Pushkin's works represents the divine forces of Eros, the god of love. This love for others unites the poet with the world and people. Pushkin finds his inspiration in the fiery aspects of reality."[67] Ermakov's belief in the organic nature of art is central to his aesthetic viewpoint, which derives both from early psychoanalytic literature and the organicist criticism that had developed in Russia out of German Romantic idealist philosophy after the 1820s.

Ermakov dismisses Pushkin's Salieri, the miserly knight, and Walsingham as self-centered individuals whose irrational, obsessive behavior prevents them from living meaningful lives. In particular, he suggests that Walsingham's mode of suffering "does not lead to the

establishment of a healthy life associated with the element of fire."[68] He also argues that Pushkin views a work of art as part of nature and produced like nature, thereby molding Pushkin into a Russian Goethe. However, even though critics and poets perceive Goethe as the father of organicist aesthetics, Goethe in fact dismissed excessive use of biological metaphor in literature. Thus, in 1772 he wrote about aspects of nature that have no regard for the individual and so destroy him, unlike art that "emerges from the efforts of the individual to maintain itself against the destructive power of the whole."[69] According to Goethe, nature organizes life that has no meaning, but the artist creates a dead artifact and bestows meaning on it.

Tsvetaeva's analysis of Pushkin's "A Feast in the Time of Plague," like Ermakov's, reinstates Goethe's belief that art invests life with meaning and so saves it from complete oblivion. In her discussion of Pushkin and Walsingham, Tsvetaeva compares Pushkin to Goethe, suggesting that both of them preserved their sanity through writing. Tsvetaeva's statement that "Pushkin saved himself from the plague, just as Goethe saved himself from destruction through writing his book *The Sorrows of Young Werther*" echoes Ermakov's reading of Walsingham's hymn to the plague as a manifestation of internal conflict.[70] Being interested in subjectivity, she claims that Pushkin, the lyric poet, reveals himself through Walsingham's song. Tsvetaeva, like Ermakov, describes Pushkin's Mary as an embodiment of the empathy to which Pushkin aspires in and through his works, and she denounces Walsingham's hymn as a manifestation of self-destruction.[71] Both Tsvetaeva's and Ermakov's interpretations of Pushkin's play allude to the notion of the revolutionary state that was incorporated into Lenin's vision of a new order founded upon suppression of the Russian trait defined as spontaneity (*stikhiinost'*).[72]

Ermakov's employment of Freudian analysis—which advances the hypothesis that art derives from an unconscious fantasy linked to primitive instincts (the id)—in relation to

Pushkin's works is subordinated to his conviction (shaped by the symbolist principle of life creation [*zhiznetvorchestvo*]) that the ultimate task of the artist is to reconcile his fantasies with reality. Thus, Ermakov sees Pushkin's Mozart and Salieri in a dialectical manner as two competing selves of the poet's personality, pointing to a protomodernist split in Pushkin himself. Ermakov talks about Salieri's inner fear of losing his fame, and he similarly views Pushkin's protagonist from the play *The Miserly Knight* as a person who is afraid of loosing his wealth and power. Likewise, Ermakov depicts Pushkin's Don Juan both as a character scared of his memories and as an alter ego of the author who sublimates his emotions, while Pushkin's Walsingham reveals the suffering self of the poet who responds to melancholy in a creative manner.[73] These interpretations point to Ermakov's search for the tools of mastery of human emotions.

Ermakov valued Freud's article "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming," which argues that art is a means of controlling dreams that is rooted in a hidden infantile desire.[74] In Freud's opinion, "A strong experience in the present awakens in the creative writer a memory of an early experience (usually belonging to childhood) from which there proceeds a wish which finds fulfilment in creative work. The work itself exhibits elements of the recent provoking occasion as well as the old memory."[75] Ermakov develops the Freudian notion of a "usable past" into his own concept of "catharsis" when he compares Freud's theory of daydreaming to the act of reading Pushkin's poetry: "Catharsis does not exist for its own sake but for the sake of creating new spiritual values, objective values. The literary artist cannot merely limit himself by seeking self-satisfaction, but, by working and laboring over his material, he is 'compelled' and obliged to create certain values."[76] Ermakov's survey of Pushkin's works written in Boldino before the poet's marriage implies that the internal emotional struggle Pushkin experienced over a possible

postmarital loss of his independence resulted in his act of "coming into being." Ermakov states that during his time spent in Boldino, Pushkin overcame his child-related anxieties in order to surpass his ego-centered self.[77]

Ermakov's discussion of Pushkin's anxieties invokes Spielrien's thesis on love. Spielrien's work on the death instinct highlights the fact that erotic attraction, which merges the images of two persons into one, can both inspire—by allowing one to transcend of the limits of the ego—and threaten the ego's independence. The ego risks delving either into the archetypal depths of the collective unconscious or into feelings of depression and annihilation. Although most psychoanalytic criticism has tended to focus on the relation between a literary text and the psychology of its creator, Ermakov incorporates the notion of readership into the analysis of literary texts. He thus prefigures Norman Holland's understanding of reading as fundamentally a re-creation of identity through a transactive interaction between reader and text.[78] Curiously, Ermakov implies that the process of reading dangerous texts exploring the dark sides of personality might have a therapeutic effect on the reader, enabling the reader to embrace the notion of the theatricality of everyday life as well as "culturedness."

The concept of estrangement (*ostranenie*), the renewal of perception of familiar objects as described by the Russian Formalists, is key to Ermakov's interpretation of *The Miserly Knight*. Thus, he explains the baron's actions as the result of estrangement from his criminal self, suggesting that the baron finds pleasure in his thoughts about a certain medical condition that help him to forget his own crimes: "Doctors tell us that there are some people who find murder pleasurable" (Nas uveriaiut mediki: est' liudi, / V ubiistve nakhodiashchie priiatnost').[79] Ermakov also thinks that Pushkin's use of the word "playboy" (povesa) in relation to the old scrooge makes the play's readers more aware that the baron's attitude toward his wealth has overtones of

erotic desire and has a theatrical aspect. Ermakov sees a split in the baron's identity: "The baron does not really characterize himself as a playboy; he just defines his attitude toward his wealth as comparable to the playboy's relation with women who are either deceived, or stupid, or carnal."[80] Instead of focusing on the aesthetic function of the baron's estrangement, however, Ermakov describes the baron's behavior in terms similar to those used in Spielrein's study "Destruction as the Cause of Coming into Being" (1912), in which she talks about the defensive nature of psychotic regression from personal conflict into a universal experience. Ermakov's survey of Pushkin's *Little Tragedies* suggests the transformative potential of such universal images.

Ermakov's interpretation of *The Stone Guest* is particularly indebted to Spielrein's work on love and death. Ermakov is interested in Don Juan's potential to overcome his anxieties, but he concludes that Don Juan dies from his inability to address his complexes rationally. In Ermakov's view, Don Juan deludes himself: it is not the environment, but his own complexes and his passivity that ruin him.[81] Such a line of thought echoes Spielrein's statement that "when one is in love, the blending of the ego in the beloved is the strongest affirmation of self, a new ego existence in the beloved. If love fails, the image becomes one of destruction or death."[82] Akhmatova dismisses Ermakov's interpretation and presents Pushkin's Don Juan as a true poet.[83] Caryl Emerson also suggests that Pushkin poeticizes and purifies the sensuous aspects of Don Juan's personality: "Pushkin awards his Don Juan lofty poetic dimensions that undercut the covetous physical aspect of his pursuit and add aesthetic luster to it."[84] Furthermore, as Jenny Stelleman rightly argues, what makes the play innovative is the presence of the implied author who is negated by the character. She points out that Pushkin's Don Juan uses both the stone statue and Dona Anna to turn himself into a legend: "This is what makes his last conquest unique. His magical, life-giving words enable the poet Don Juan, who here almost acts as co-

author, to correct the implied author and allow, fully aware of the consequences, the sujet to resume its conventional course."[85] Instead of engaging with Pushkin's creative appropriation of the Don Juan legend as do these other commentators, Ermakov interprets Don Juan's death in Freudian terms: as the punishing hand of the father presenting Donna Anna's kiss as the kiss of the mother.

Yet Ermakov's pioneering efforts to view Pushkin's themes in the light of Spielrein's work reinforce his belief that creativity and affectivity serve as a source of energy that influences the dynamic formation of language and thought. All the flaws of his analysis of Pushkin's poetry notwithstanding, Ermakov demonstrates that the classical transparency that has often been attributed to Pushkin's poetry should be seen as deceptive given the complex interaction between mind and feeling that formed Pushkin's poetic personality. Ermakov thus develops Dmitrii Merezhkovsky's vision of Pushkin as a profound thinker for whom inspiration presupposes the power of reason, enabling the poet and his readers to comprehend the whole through the perception of its parts. In the final analysis, Ermakov's book on Pushkin constitutes an attempt at using psychoanalytic tools to support and reinforce Merezhkovsky's view that Pushkin is comparable to Goethe: that is, that Pushkin eventually overcame the disharmony of the Byronic creative impulse and embraced the principle of emotional self-control.[86] Ermakov also develops Merezhkovsky's idea that one of the fundamental themes embedded in Pushkin's poetry is the tension between civilized and elemental selves, and he presents this thesis as being useful for the construction of a Marxist aesthetic theory.

In the context of the process of institutionalizing Pushkin's legacy in Soviet Russia in the 1920s and 1930s, Ermakov's book on Pushkin appears to be at odds with the tendency to create an all-powerful myth of Pushkin as a national poet around which cultural and scholarly

institutions could be organized. Critics usually portray the 1937 celebration of the centenary of Pushkin's death as a literary festival of unprecedented scale that was meant to display national, social, and cultural unity. It is difficult not to agree with Boris Gasparov, who describes the national celebration of the 1937 jubilee as a "definitive cultural watershed" that "marks the culmination of the evolution of Pushkin myth in the age of Modernism."[87] Many stern Soviet critics and censors at the time would have defined Ermakov's book as an exploration of taboo subjects such as the metaphysical aspects of Pushkin's thought, the representation of violence and madness, the role of the irrational in literature, and the creative sublimation of sexuality. Yet Ermakov's 1923 book can nevertheless be seen, from several different perspectives, as having contributed to the formation of the Pushkin myth.

As Stephanie Sandler rightly observes, although in the 1920s Pushkin was not yet the favorite of Russia's newly literate readers, as early as 1924 some influential cultural figures, including Anatolii Lunacharsky, predicted that Pushkin's star would rise in the near future.[88] In anticipation of this event, Ermakov's analysis of Pushkin's creative psychology might have been understood by Soviet psychoanalytical critics as an allegorical reading—a fictionalized creative biography that takes account of the dual temporality of Pushkin's legacy, acknowledging both the Russian past and the Soviet present.[89] The allegorical sign has a dual function and points to something other than itself, making the reader aware of the seeming near impossibility of reconciling present and past or self and other. In a didactic sense, then, Ermakov's discussion of Pushkin's inner emotional struggle offered some useful insights into his creative process, enabling the reader of the 1920s to overcome his own traumatic experiences.

Sandler's juxtaposition of 1920s Soviet scholarship on Pushkin's life and works with the concurrent transformation of his ancestral home of Mikhailovskoe into a monument reveals the

mechanism of substitution that would contribute to the monumentalization of Pushkin in subsequent decades. According to Sandler, Soviet-era Mikhailovskoe can be read allegorically as an imaginary space that makes visible the labor of preserving and points "a visitor's attention to what has been preserved, by whom, with whose help and in what circumstances"; "as allegory, Mikhailovskoe consists of no mere trees, hills, river or edifices, but of natural views described in Pushkin's writings or presumed to have provided inspiration for his greatness"; "it seems to convey a full sense of Pushkin's biography."[90] So, too, Ermakov's book might be seen as an allegorical representation of Pushkin's artistic "laboratory" comprising a culturally constructed landscape permeated with the rhetoric of labor.

At the same time, Ermakov's analysis of Pushkin's works can be read as a veiled reference to an effort in the literary and scholarly world of 1920s Soviet Russia to reverse the predictions about the twilight of culture articulated in poet Vladislav Khodasevich's 1921 speech "The Shaken Tripod" ("Koleblemyi trenozhnik"). Khodasevich claimed that the twentieth century's wars and revolutions had altered Russian readers' sensibilities irrevocably. Hence Ermakov's reading of Pushkin's works as psychodrama may be construed as an attempt to reach out to Soviet readers who had been barbarized by the experiences of wars and revolutions and had thus become estranged from Pushkin's authentic language. As Khodasevich pointed out, such readers, affected by the wild dramatic scenes cultivated in contemporary films, were conditioned to translate Pushkin's emotion into the language of their own sensual experiences.[91] In the end, it is difficult to assess whether Ermakov's animated account of Pushkin's creative psychology was meant to compete with the increased influence of visual culture in 1920s Soviet Russia or whether Ermakov envisaged his model of the organic reading of literature as the basis for a new form of life writing that blends Marxist and Freudian approaches to the production of

cultural artifacts.

<A>Notes

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[1] Ivan D. Ermakov, *Psikhoanaliz literatury: Pushkin, Gogol', Dostoevskii* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obrozrenie, 1999).

[2] Ermakov's contribution to the development of psychoanalysis in Russia is discussed in Martin A. Miller, "Freudian Theory under Bolshevik Rule: The Theoretical Controversy during the 1920s," *Slavic Review* 44.4 (1985): 625–46; see esp. 625–26.

[3] Several essays and books published in the early 1920s by Bolshevik moralists, including Leon Trotsky's 1923 book *Problems of Everyday Life: Creating the Foundations for a New Society in Revolutionary Russia*, were opposed to young militants' rebellious behavior based on the legacy of the Civil War. They advocated instead the importance of cultured behavior that comprised hygiene, punctuality, sobriety, self-discipline, respectful attitudes toward women, wearing clean clothes, and reading books. See the detailed discussion of the notion of civilized behavior in Anne E. Gorsuch, "NEP Be Damned! Young Militants and the Culture of Civil War," *Russian Review* 56.4 (1997): 564–80.

[4] Ermakov's utopian vision of a new society might be seen as part of the process defined by Richard Stites as revolutionary performance. See his *Revolutionary Dreams: Utopian Vision and Experimental Life in the Russian Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 7.

[5] Ivan D. Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina: Opyt organicheskogo ponimaniia "Domika v Kolomne," "Proroka" i malen'kikh tragedii* (Moscow: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1923), 5. Ermakov's understanding of art as a creative activity entwined with the cognition of life stems from an organic conception of art advocated by Hegel. This conception links logic, the philosophy of nature, ethics, and aesthetics to the notion of organic life, suggesting that ideas are objectively living. Victor Terras discusses the importance of an organic vision of art for socialist realism and links it with the organicist aesthetics advocated by various representatives of German Romanticism: "Socialist Realism shares with the whole organic tradition the notion that art has far more than a mimetic or emotive function. In arguments, rather common in Soviet aesthetic literature, as to whether art is creative activity or cognition, a majority of authors will take the position that it is both" ("Phenomenological Observations on the Aesthetics of Socialist Realism," *Slavic and East European Journal,* 23.4 [1979]: 446). He also notes that socialist realist theory never abandoned the central positions of organicist aesthetics. For a broader discussion of the organicist tradition in the Russian history of ideas, see Amy Mandelker, "Semiotizing the Sphere: Organicist Theory in Lotman, Bakhtin, and Vernadsky," *PMLA* 109.3 (1994): 385–96.

[6] According to René Wellek, "It grows out of the organic analogy, developed by Herder and Goethe, but proceeds beyond it to a view of poetry as a union of opposites, a system of symbols" (*A History of Modern Criticism, 1750–1950*, vol. 2, *The Romantic Age* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981], 3).

[7] Although Ermakov does not provide a clear definition of his term "dynamic unconscious," his analysis of Pushkin's poetry emphasizes the unconscious roots of symbolism and all cognitive

processes. Ermakov's notion of self presupposes a fluid process of identity formation associated with competing emotions and inner struggle.

[8] Peter Kenez defines the 1920s as a period of mass mobilization and suggests that without the preparatory work of the decade, a fully totalitarian society could not have emerged in the 1930s (*The Birth of Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985], 12).

[9] See Gorsuch, "NEP Be Damned!," 573–77; Michael David-Fox, "What is Cultural Revolution?" *Russian Review* 58.2 (1999): 190–97.

[10] According to Lynn Mally, Lenin's references to such words as "culture" and "culturedness" were not consistent: sometimes he equated these terms with the accumulated knowledge of educated elites, but at other times he linked them to cleanliness and punctuality. Mally suggests that Lenin and his Bolshevik colleagues realized the necessity of a cultural transformation of Soviet society but "the blueprints for building a socialist culture were no clearer than those for a socialist polity" (*Culture of the Future: The Proletkult Movement in Revolutionary Russia* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992], xvi). See also Mally's discussion of the legacy of the Proletkult after 1921 (245–46).

[11] David-Fox, "What is Cultural Revolution?" 193, 199. G. Lelevich was a pseudonym of Labori Gilelevich Kalmanson (1901–37), one of the leading Russian Association of Proletarian Writers critics and editor of the literary journal *On the Literary Guard* (*Na literaturnom postu*).

[12] David-Fox, "What is Cultural Revolution?" 195.

[13] Aleksandr K. Voronsky, "Freudianism and Art," in his *Art as the Cognition of Life: Selected Writings, 1911–1936*, trans. and ed. Frederick S. Choate (Oak Park, MI: Mehring Books, 1998),

188.

[14] I.**A.** Grigor'ev, "Psikhoanaliz kak metod issledovaniia khudozhestvennoi literatury," *Krasnaia nov'* 7 (1925): 221–36.

[15] Ischaia D. Sapir, "Freidizm i marksizm," *Pod znamenem marksizma* 1 (1926): 70.

[16] Roman Jakobson, "Socha v symbolice Puskinové," *Slovo a slovesnost* 3 (1937): 2–24; for the Russian version of the article, see Roman Iakobson, "Statuia v poeticheskoi mifologii Pushkina," in his *Raboty po poetike* (Moscow: Progress, 1987), 145–80 (quote on 157). See also Mirsky's dismissal of Ermakov's analysis in, his review of Janko Lavrin's *Gogol* in the *Slavonic Review* 5.13 (1926): 223.

[17] Leon D. Trotsky, "Culture and Socialism," in Voronsky, *Art as the Cognition of Life*, 468.

[18] Valentin N. Voloshinov, *Freidizm: Kriticheskii ocherk* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1927).

[19] Valentin N. Voloshinov, "Freudianism: A Critical Sketch," in *The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin*, *Medvedev and Voloshinov*, ed. Pam Morris (London: Arnold, 1994), 39.

[20] Leon D. Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, I960), 179.

[21] Quoted in Alastair Renfrew, *Toward a New Material Aesthetics: Bakhtin, Genre and the Fates of Literary Theory* (London: Legenda, 2006), 11. As Renfrew notes, "The Formalists—some with utter deliberation, others at least partly unwittingly—abandon[ed] the possibility of theoretical 'reunification' in favor of pretensions of occupying the very ground previously assumed to be the natural province of some form of Marxism" (*Toward a New Material Aesthetics*, 12).

[22] Quoted in Miller, "Freudian Theory under Bolshevik Rule," 625.

[23] In spite of the fact that Veresaev had chaired the cultural and education commission of the Moscow Soviet since 1917, his 1924 article "What Is Needed to Be a Writer" ("Chto nuzhno dlia togo, chtoby byt' pisatelem") was criticized by some leftist writers for ignoring the social basis of human activities. In her article on the use of Pushkin in everyday life during the Silver Age period, Irina Paperno discusses Veresaev's evolution as a biographer of Pushkin. She claims that Veresaev's 1929 book *On Two Levels* (*V dvukh planakh*) offers a scientific examination of Pushkin's personality and abandons the symbolist myth about the unity between Puskin the man and Pushkin the poet ("Pushkin v zhizni cheloveka serebrianogo veka," in *Cultural Mythologies of Russian Modernism: From the Golden Age to the Silver Age*, ed. Boris Gasparov, Robert P. Hughes, and Irina Paperno [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992], 27–28).

[24] See Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Cultural Front: Power and Culture in Revolutionary Russia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1992), 1–2.

[25] This phrase was first coined by the writer Iurii Olesha and then used by Joseph Stalin in connection with the development of the doctrine of socialist realism.

[26] Pushkin's oppressors were described in Alexander Blok's 1921 speech "The Poet's Role" ("O naznachenii poeta") as enemies of the poet who snatch away the peace and freedom that are prerequisite to the poet's activity. See Alexander Blok, "The Poet's Role," in David J. R. Richards and C. Roger Cockrell, eds., *Russian Views of Pushkin* (Oxford, UK: Willem A. Meeuws, 1976), 127–34.

[27] Shostakovich composed an introspective vocal cycle, *Four Romances to Words by A. Pushkin* (*Chetyre romansa na slova A. Pushkina* [1936–37]), op. 46, which, like Ermakov's book, highlights the poet's inner conflicts and anxieties. For a brief discussion of the cycle and its

relation to the imperative of "culturedness," see Philip Ross Bullock, "The Pushkin Anniversary of 1937 and Russian Art-Song in the Soviet Union," *Slavonica* 13.1 (2007): 4–5.

[28] Catriona Kelly, *Children's World: Growing Up in Russia, 1890–1991* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 86.

[29] Nikolai. E. Osipov, *Psikhoanaliticheskie i filosofskie etiudy,* ed. D**mitrii** Petrovich Brylev (Moscow: Akademicheskii proekt, 2000).

[30] In his article on Tintoretto (1518–94), an Italian painter famous for his dramatic depiction of perspectival space, Gabrichevsky asserts that Tintoretto's landscapes represent the chaos of organic life imbued with meaning and permeated with allusions to the artist's inner emotional struggle ("Prostranstvo i kompozitsiia v iskusstve Tintoretto," *Soobshcheniia gosudarstvennogo muzeia izobrazitel'nogo iskusstva im. A. S. Pushkina* 9 [1991]: 286–87). On Evreinov's notion of the theatricality of life and his use of Freud's ideas in his 1912 play *The Theater of the Soul* (*V kulisakh dushi*), see Alexandra Smith, "Nikolai Evreinov and Edith Craig as Mediums of Modernist Sensibility," *New Theatre Quarterly* 26.3 (2010): 203–16.

[31] Anna A. Akhmatova, *O Pushkine: Stat'i i zametki* (Leningrad: Sovetskii pisatel', 1977), 108.

[32] Alfred Adler, "Dostoevsky," in his *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology*, trans. Paul Radin (London: Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1924), 280–90.

[33] The notion of mad genius is discussed by George Becker in *The Mad Genius Controversy: A Study in the Sociology of Deviance* (Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications, 1978).

[34] See Irina Sirotkina, *Diagnosing Literary Genius: A Cultural History of Psychiatry in Russia, 1880–1930* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2002), 4.

[35] Ivan L. Shcheglov [Ivan L. Leont'ev], "Neskromnye dogadki," in his *Novoe o Pushkine* (St.

Petersburg, 1902), 132–47; Vasilii V. Rozanov, "Koe-chto novoe o Pushkine," *Novoe vremia*, 21 July 1900, 2. Rozanov's essay is reprinted in *Pushkin v russkoi filosofskoi kritike: Konets XIX—pervaia polovina XX v.*, compiled by Renata A. Gal'tseva (Moscow: Kniga, 1990), 182–91. There were several publications of this article in 1924. In 1928 Khodasevich attacked Shcheglov's presentation of Pushkin as a criminal who could be punished under Soviet law in relation to the 1826 incident involving a peasant girl. See Vladislav Khodasevich, "V sporakh o Pushkine," in *Stat'i, retsenzii, zametki, 1925–1934 gg.*, vol. 2 of *Pushkin i poety ego vremeni*, 3 vols., ed. Robert Hughes (Stanford, CA: Berkley Slavic Specialties, 2001), 132–53.

[36] Ermakov, *Psikhoanaliz literatury*, 15–18.

[37] Quoted in English in Donald Young, "Ermakov and Psychoanalytic Criticism in Russia," *Slavic and East European Journal* 23.1 (1979): 79.

[38] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 174.

[39] Aleksandr S. Pushkin, "Prorok," in A.S. Pushkin. *Sobranie sochinenii v 10 tomakh,* volume 2, (Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Akademii nauk, 1956), 338-39, 338..

[40] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 187.

[41] In 1923 Spielrein worked as a researcher at the State Institute of Psychoanalysis and as director of the Department of Child Psychology at the University of Moscow. See Marie J. Santiago-Delefrosse and J.-M. Oderic Delefrosse, "Spielrein, Piaget and Vygotsky: Three Positions on Child Thought and Language," *Theory and Psychology* 6.12 (2002): 723–47.

[42] Tsvetaeva's 1937 essay "My Pushkin" ("Moi Pushkin") juxtaposes children's creativity and Pushkin's artistic psychology in a similar manner.

[43] See Sabina Spielrein, "On the Development and Origin of Speech," *International Journal of*

Psychoanalysis 1 (1920): 359–61, and Sabina Spielrein, "Quelques analogies entre la pensée de l'enfant, celle de l'aphasique et la pensée subconsciente," *Archives de Psychologie* 72 (1923): 305–22.

[44] Spielrein identifies the importance of the mother in the formation of children's selves through the act of reading in her essay "Destruction as the Cause of Coming into Being," *Journal of Analytical Psychology* 39.2 (1994): 157.

[45] Spielrein explains: "According to [Jung], we do not possess an undivided ego, but rather various complexes that struggle with each other for priority" ("Destruction as the Cause of Coming into Being," 160).

[46] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 183.

[47] Harold Bloom, "Poetry, Revisionism, and Repression," in his *Poetry and Repression: Revisionism from Blake to Stevens* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976), 1–26.

[48] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 120.

[49] Ibid., 121.

[50] See Jacqueline Lee Friedlander, "Psychiatrists and Crisis in Russia, 1880–1917" (PhD diss., University of California,Berkeley, 2007), 422.

[51] According to Jacqueline Friedlander, the events of this period broadened medical specialists' understanding of the traumatic event, compelling them "to come into direct contact with the battlefield" ("Psychiatrists and Crisis in Russia, 1880–1917," 262–64).

[52] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 92.

[53] Ibid., 138.

[54] Alexander Pushkin, "A Feast in the City of the Plague," trans. Alexander Werth, *Slavonic*

Review 6.16 (1927): 181.

[55] Lotman interprets Walsingham's hymn in a different way: he sees it as an act of victory (*Pushkin: Ocherk tvorchestva* [St. Petersburg: Prosveshchenie, 1997], 202).

[56] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 139.

[57] See Dmitrii S. Merezhkovskii, *Pushkin: Vechnye sputniki* (St. Petersburg: Tipografiia M. Merkusheva, 1897) and Iurri I. Aikhenval'd, *Pushkin* (Moscow: Kushnerev, 1916).

[58] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 142.

[59] Evgenii Steiner discusses the notions of chaos and dynamism in Soviet books for children in *Avangard i postroenie novogo cheloveka: Iskusstvo sovetskoi knigi 1920-kh godov* (Moscow: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2002).

[60] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 145.

[61] Ibid.,149.

[62] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenolgy of Perception*, trans. Colin Smith (London: Routledge, 2002), 404.

[63] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 150.

[64] Young, "Ermakov and Psychoanalytic Criticism in Russia," 74.

[65] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 150.

[66] Merleau-Ponty's distinctive method of combining phenomenological description with analysis of the result of empirical scientific inquiry is illustrated by his reference to the phenomenon of the phantom limb, which serves as a paradigm of bodily self-perception, wherein individuals who have lost an arm or a leg may continue to have experiences related to the lost limb (*The Phenomenolgy of Perception*, 76).

[67] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 153.

[68] Ibid., 155.

[69] Quoted by John Neubauer, "Organicist Poetics as Romantic Heritage?," in Angela Esterhammer, *Romantic Poetry* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2002), 493.

[70] Marina I. Tsvetaeva, "Iskusstvo pri svete sovesti," in her *Sochineniia*, 2 vols. (Moscow: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1988), 2:378.

[71] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 379.

[72] Ermakov's interest in relieving the pain of rediscovered past emotions through reading and acting is linked to some experiments of Soviet filmmakers and theater directors of the 1920s that were concerned with the art of mastering spontaneous emotions through repetition. Amy Sargeant describes their fascination with manual labor and a machine aesthetic thus: "It was something of a contemporary commonplace to celebrate in manual labour an aesthetic as much as a social value. . . . The repetition of a given activity reduces the movement to an essential and typical standard denominator, to the least expenditure of physical effort required to accomplish the task" (*Vsevolod Pudovkin: Classic Films of the Soviet Avant-garde* [London: I. B. Tauris, 2000], 14).

[73] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 173.

[74] See Young, "Ermakov and Psychoanalytic Criticism," 74.

[75] Sigmund Freud, "Creative Writers and Day-Dreaming," in *The Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, 24 vols. (London: Hogarth Press, 1973), 9:151. Quoted in Young, "Ermakov and Psychoanalytic Criticism," 74.

[76] Ivan D. Ermakov, *Ocherki po analizu tvorchestva N. V. Gogolia* (Moscow: Gosizdat, 1924),

164.

[77] Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 175.

[78] Norman Holland, "The Miller's Wife and the Professors: Questions about the Transactive Theory of Reading," *New Literary History* 17.34 (1986): 423–47.

[79] See Ermakov, *Etiudy po psikhologii tvorchestva A. S. Pushkina*, 47.

[80] Ibid., 45.

[81] Ibid., 130.

[82] Spielrein, "Destruction as the Cause of Coming into Being," 174.

[83] Akhmatova, *O Pushkine*, 100–101. In spite of some polemical disagreements with Ermakov, Akhmatova, like Ermakov, focuses her analysis on Pushkin's creative psychology.

[84] Caryl Emerson, *The Cambridge Introduction to Russian Literature* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 50.

[85] Jenny Stelleman, "The Stone Guest and Don Guan," *Russian Literature* 52 (2002): 508.

[86] See Dmitrii S. Merezhkovskii, "Pushkin," in *Pushkin v russkoi filosofskoi kritike*, 103.

[87] Boris Gasparov, "The 'Golden Age' and Its Role in the Cultural Mythology of *Russian* Modernism," in *Cultural Mythologies of Russian Modernism*, 15–16.

[88] Stephanie Sandler, "Remembrance in Mikhailovskoe," in *Cultural Mythologies of Russian Modernism*, 237.

[89] For a discussion of the function of this dual temporality in the speeches of the 1937 Pushkin plenum of the Soviet Writers' Union, see Carol Any's "The Red Pushkin and the Writers' Union in 1937," in this volume.

[90] Sandler, "Remembrance in Mikhailovskoe," 246, 244–45.

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[91] Vladislav Khodasevich, "Koleblemyi trenozhnik," in his *Sobranie sochinenii*, 4 vols. (Moscow: Soglasie, 1996), 2:81.

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